

Eng. Poetry vol 28

A N

EPISTLE

F R O M

CALISTA to ALTAMONT.

*Such is the Fate unhappy Women find,
And such the Curse entail'd upon our Kind,
That Man, the lawless Libertine, may rove
Free and unquestion'd thro' the Wilds of Love,
Whilst Woman, Sense and Nature's easy Fool,
If poor weak Woman swerve from Virtue's Rule,
If strongly charm'd, she leave the Thorny Way,
And in the softer Paths of Pleasure stray,
Ruin ensues, Reproach and endless Shame,
And one false Step entirely damns her Fame:
In vain with Tears the Loss she may deplore,
In vain look back to what she was before,
She sets, like Stars that fall, to rise no more.*

ROWE's Jane Shore.

L O N D O N:

Printed for *A. Moore*, and Sold by the Bookfellers of
London and Westminster, 1729.
(Price Six-Pence.)

EPITOME

FOR

CALLISTA to ALTAMONT.



Tower Lane Shore

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A N

EPISTLE

F R O M

Calista to Altamont.

T O jealous Love, and injur'd Honour's Ear,
 What Words can a detected Woman clear?
 In guilty Joys discover'd to thy Eye,
 To what sad Refuge shall *Calista* fly?
 Thy Rage with bold Defiance shall I meet?
 Or fall an humble Suppliant at thy Feet?
 No, *Altamont*! both Methods I disdain;
 The first is Cruel, and the last is Vain:

Th'

Th' *Insulter* o'er thy Woes I scorn to live,
And *Thou* hast too much Spirit to *forgive*.

Then, for thy Peace, this only Counsel take;
(The best Attonement that my Guilt can make;) Think, whilst my Falshood to thy Bed I own,
The hard Misfortune is not thine alone:
Survey the glitt'ring World, and Thousands see
False as *Calista*, and abus'd as *Thee*.

Beauty is uselefs, should it fear to range;
Our Sex's Charter is the Love of Change:
Our Charms more Votaries than One demand,
And loath, like Gold, the griping Miser's Hand.
In Pleasure's *Garden* all our Hours are pass'd,
We view the *Fruit*, and where we *like*, we *taste*.

On the gay sprightly *Fulvia* cast thy Eyes,
To *Clodius* newly join'd in *Hymen's* Ties:
Thinks she, *from thence*, her Will the more confin'd?
Wears she the *Nuptial Fetters* on her Mind?
To her blind LORD, are all her *Bounties* shown?
And all her Charms His *Property* alone?
Unpitying can she hear another sigh?
And think it is her Duty to deny?
If with such vertuous Principles possess'd,
The vain *Lorenzo* had been still unbless'd.

Let the kind friendly Couch, and conscious Grove
 Attest to *Florio Melesinda's* Love ;
 High tho' her *Husband*, of the noblest Line,
 Great, tho' his Fondness ——— nay, as strong as Thine.
 Not all his Merits could confine her Charms,
 Or keep the Treasure from another's Arms ;
 Nay, to so fierce an Height her *Flame* was grown,
 She thought it glorious Pride to have it known.
 E'en, when the Grave her Rapture snatch'd away,
 And made the Lover its untimely Prey,
 Still did the Fondness of her Breast remain,
 His dear Idea did she still retain ;
 To shew, she e'en his Ashes did adore,
 Her *Griefs* were *Publick*, as her *Joys* before.
 Yet, if the kind *Castalio* could forgive,
 And to his Arms th' unhappy Wife receive,
 When eas'd at length by *Foreign Air*, and Time,
 Again she visited her *Native Clime*,
 Let him not lessen in the World's Regard,
 But his mild Conduct be its own Reward.

But are these all the *guilty Truths* are known ?
 Is it enough I instance *These* alone ?
 No, I'll proceed thy Comforter, and shew
 The proud admir'd *Corinna* to thy View,
 Who, high in *Rank*, as in her *Features* bright,
 Deceiv'd her Husband on her *Wedding-Night* ;

To bold ROSSANO sacrific'd her Fame,
And made the *Bridal* Bed, the Bed of *Shame*.

Here let me add the Wrongs, and dang'rous Flames
Of *other* HUSBANDS, and of *other* DAMES,
Who in their Turns have been betray'd like *Thee*,
And from the Faith they swore seduc'd like *Me*.

When her first *Lord* had scorn'd *Pulcheria's* Charms,
The Great *Alphonfus* woo'd her to his Arms,
Bad all his Wealth her Injuries repair,
And in his Palace lodg'd the *mourning* FAIR.
Did this her strongest Gratitude command,
And make her *Heart* accompany her Hand?
Did she the Duty of a Wife approve,
And meet with equal Joys his generous Love?
No, to *politer*, *freer* *Maxims* bred,
She found no real Transport in his Bed.
Illness oft feign'd, invited MED'CINE'S Pow'r,
And PHYSICK was her Cry each *vap'rish* Hour;
THIS by Great^r GALEN'S Hand alone apply'd,
Preserv'd the *Patient*, till the *Husband* dy'd,
Which blest Event bad all her Pleasures flow,
And left her Freedom to be *Sick* or *No*.

And why shall *Flavia* 'scape from Censure free,
In the stol'n Joy descry'd as plain as *Me*?

More than myself was she at Will to chuse?
 Or could her Lover's Rank her Crime excuse?
 Tho' rais'd above the common Sons of Earth,
 The proudest Titles hail'd him at his Birth.
 Would Husbands meet, their Sufferings to compare,
 Hers may with Grounds enough assemble There.

With these Amours of modern Date I end,
 And think, tho' Wife no more, I'm yet thy Friend;
 But would'st thou more Examples still behold,
 Look back thyself to Histories of old,
 And *Chieftains* of the foremost Rank Thou'lt find
 To their Wives Failings, from strong Reason, blind,
 Who scorn'd to give their Hearts a Moment's Pain,
 Nor thought another's Crimes their Wreaths could stain.
 Shall it not joy thee in *That List* to see
 CATO, the Patron of fair LIBERTY,
 Greatly regardless of his Consort's Face,
 Lend her kind Beauties to a Friend's Embrace?
 And what opprobrious Tongue shall dare deride
That as THY Scandal *which* was CATO's Pride?

Thus far I've labour'd to give Aid to Thee;
 But Heav'n itself denies to succour Me;
 Let the gay WANTONS I've been bold to name,
 Triumph o'er Infamy, and conquer Shame,
 Not *Altamont*! is such *Calista's* Soul,
 She knows her late Offence, and knows it foul;

And

And sure the Woman who her Guilt must own,
And once can need a Pardon, merits none.

Then *Altamont*! accept this last Adieu!
'Tis fruitless now to wish I had been true;
From the World's Thoughts and thine I haste away,
And bid the Grave receive it's willing Prey.
Whilst I'm the Theme of Scoffers, Life's a Pain;
And who did e'er lost Innocence regain?
Death's the best *Law* to set the Wretched free;
Death shall divorce me from MYSELF and THEE.

F I N I S

